

## NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT

Date Submitted: 12/7/09

Date Reviewed by ICL staff and sent to ITC Rep: 12/9/09rn

Grant Organization: Southern Idaho Tourism

Grant # 08-IV-1

Check one: Interim

Final XX

Report Period: From 8/1/2008

to 9/30/2009

Reviewed 12/9/09 rn

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In the space below or on an attached sheet, answer the following questions for EACH element in your scope of work.

Interim - All of these questions should be answered for EACH project in all reports except the final report. List element by name & element number.

1. Has the element been completed?
2. If the element is in progress:
  - (a) What has been accomplished?
  - (b) What remains to be done?
  - (c) Are there any problems?
3. If the element hasn't been started, why?
4. What benefits have been realized to date? (Include statistical information.)

Final -This is your last report. Answer each question by element and project in your scope of work.

1. What was accomplished?
2. How did it promote travel in Idaho?
3. Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.
4. List any recommendations for project improvement.

### Element I Tourism Assets Inventory/Asset Mapping in Communities

What was accomplished?

How did it promote travel in Idaho?

Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

List any recommendations for project improvement.

We now have an updated database of tourism assets in the region and an awareness by the communities we serve that these assets are their building blocks of their tourism product. We employed two methodologies - an online survey via Survey Monkey and three communities elected to do hard copy surveys. One community Hagerman paired their in-depth Community Survey with a Community Work Session and developed priorities and actions to move forward on. This report was provided to the City of Hagerman at their City Council meeting. Copies were also provided to the Gooding County Commissioners and Representative Donna Pence of Legislative District 26, Seat B. The other communities who elected to do in-depth surveys are Gooding and the Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce. Their efforts are on-going, as they should be.

This Asset Inventory will help us set clearer goals in our promotion of our travel product in Region IV going forward.

### Element II Marketing

What was accomplished?

How did it promote travel in Idaho?

Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

List any recommendations for project improvement.

Our marketing goals for the year; they are:

- Increase lodging tax collections by 2%
- Increase individual visitor expenditure from \$148.00 to \$151.00 or 2%
- Increase website traffic/usage by 25%

We fell short of our goal of increasing lodging tax collections by 2%; yet in a challenging economic year the collections for our region were flat and we believe we provided value and variety of experience to our traveler. Our presence in Sunset Magazine provided visibility and achieved remarkable results; three ads generated 1,714 responses. Packets of information were sent to these folks.

Our Stay and Play proved to be a popular publication. 12,500 are printed. 10,000 are inserted in Images of Southern Idaho Magazine. This year, this year we ran out of Images; all 10,000 copies were distributed to visitors, a small number are used in traditional economic development efforts in the region. The over-run of 2500 Stay & Play inserts have also been completely distributed.

We supported Special Olympics, even though all major events were held in either Sun Valley or in the Treasure Valley. The athletes enjoyed their stay in our communities and our volunteers enjoyed hosting these remarkable athletes from all over the world. We supported unique events that drew people to our region - Winter in the Almo Valley, Shop, Stay, and Play, Snake River Canyon Jam, Spudman Triathlon and Viking Man Triathlon, The inaugural Quilt Walk in Historic Downtown Twin Falls, a Coop Advertising campaign for the Hagerman Valley, the Idaho International Dance and Music Festival's 24<sup>th</sup> year and 5<sup>th</sup> year in Burley, the Herrett Center and of course our two Scenic Byways.

The events are valid and are designed to bring visitors to our region to our hotels and attractions. During the 09 grant year, we will work to build capacity to each campaign and add conversion element to more completely document our results to the Idaho Travel Council.

#### Element III Website Programs

What was accomplished?

How did it promote travel in Idaho?

Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

List any recommendations for project improvement

We worked very hard this year to make our site data-rich and user friendly. Our mini-sites for our municipal park systems and golf course are complete. We also worked to complete the meeting, and reunion information on the site for visitors seeking places to meet or have family reunions. This was a result of analyzing our Google Analytics and seeing where our visitors were seeking information on our site.

We reached our goal of increasing our site usage:

From the 07 grant year to this grant year, our website usage increased 99.65%, Pageviews were up 59.43%. Visitors utilizing the lodging portion of our site increased 89.38%. We have however lost time on the site by an average of 45 seconds over the year. We need to recapture this time and also stay current with technology trends...keeping our site simple, easy and providing our visitor with the information they want and need to make the decision to visit and stay in Southern Idaho.

#### Element IV Brochures

What was accomplished?

How did it promote travel in Idaho?

Provide statistical information and what evaluation technique was used to determine.

List any recommendations for project improvement.

Please see the information above in Element II regarding Stay and Play. We will continue to build on this success during the 09 grant year.

We will continue our support of the Scenic Byway statewide brochure.